

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8796

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 2322

LIMDIS

ADDIS ABABA FOR ASST SECTY DAVIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, CASC (SMUTS, BARBARA)(SMITH, KENNETH STEVEN)

(HUNTER, CARRIE JANE)

SUBJ: KIDNAPPED AMERICANS: PRELIMINARY DEBRIEFING OF RELEASED  
STUDENTS

1. EMBASSY BEGAN DEBRIEFING RELEASED STUDENTS CARRIE JANE HUNTER  
AND EMILIE BERGMANN MORNING JUNE 29. DEBRIEFING IS BEING TAPED  
AND THIS PRELIMINARY TELEGRAM BASED ON EMBOFF MEMORY; TAPES WILL  
BE TRANSCRIBED AND SUBMITTED LATER. THIS TELEGRAM WILL CONCENTRATE  
ON INFORMATION OF POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANCE TO RELEASE KENNETH STEVEN  
SMITH.

2. FOUR HOUR DEBRIEFING SESSION ATTENDED BY TWO RELEASED STUDENTS,  
AMERICAN AND NETHERLANDS AMBASSADORS, DCM AND POLITICAL OFFICER,  
NORMAN HUNTER, AND MR. AND MRS. DEREK BRYCESON.

A. TANGOV AND PRP: STUDENTS SAID, AND BRYCESON CONFIRMED, THAT  
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TANGOV RELEASED PRP PRISONER, SALEH KALENGA, BRIGADIER

GENERAL AND MEMBER OF PRP REVOLUTIONARY AND CENTRAL COMMITTEES. KALENGA WAS RELEASED JUNE 16 AND INTENDED TO CROSS LAKE TO ZAIRE NEXT DAY, BUT ACCORDING TO STORY STUDENTS HEARD HE GOT STUCK IN KIGOMA, SOMEHOW MISSED CONTACTING ALFRED NONDO THERE, AND FINALLY GOT CANOED ACROSS TO CAMP WHERE STUDENTS HELD, ARRIVING MORNING JUNE 26. SUBSEQUENTLY, BRYCESON ALSO SAID THAT WHILE RESCUE PARTY WAS IN KIGOMA, HE TOOK NONDO TO REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER FOR MEETING WITH TANZANIAN INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY (TISS) CHIEF LAWRENCE GAMA FOR A LONG CONFERENCE. BRYCESON SAID NONDO WAS VERY PLEASED BECAUSE GAVE NONDO OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS PRP COMPLAINTS ABOUT ALLEGED TANGOV ACTIONS AGAINST PRP EG. ARREST AND CONFISCATION OF MONEY OF PRP MAN AFTER HE HAD QTE ARRANGED UNQTE PURCHASE OF WEAPONS. GAVE TANGOV OPPORTUNITY FIND OUT WHO PRP TALKING TO. BOTH REPS TANGOV AND PRP FOUND MEETING USEFUL. PRP REPS MUCH MORE RELAXED AND COOPERATIVE AFTER THIS MEETING.

B. SCENARIO OF EXCHANGE AND CHANGE OF PRP PLANS: ON JUNE 26 CARRIE HUNTER AND EMILIE BERGMANN WERE TAKEN BY CANOE SOME FOUR HOURS PADDLE SOUTH OF THEIR ORIGINAL LOCATION TO ANOTHER VILLAGE NEAR LAKE. THEY WERE LED TO UNDERSTAND THAT STEVE SMITH WAS TO FOLLOW LATER. PREPARATIONS WERE GOING ON IN NEW VILLAGE FOR A FEAST AND DANCE, WHICH STUDENTS LED TO BELIEVE WAS CONNECTED WITH THEIR RELEASE. STEVE DID NOT APPEAR.

WHEN EXCHANGE BOAT WITH NORMAN HUNTER, MISSIONARY MARROW, AND ALFRED NONDO AND HIS AIDE ARRIVED AT THIS NEW LOCATION, IT WAS FACED WITH HEAVEY MILITARY PREPARATIONS WHICH NEGATED ANY REALISTIC POSSIBILITY OF CHALLENGING PRP ARRANGEMENTS OR TERMS. EXCHANGE PARTY WAS TOLD, TO NONDO'S EVIDENT SURPRISE AND CONCERN, THAT IN ACCORDANCE NEW INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRP PRESIDENT KABILA, STEVE SMITH WOULD NOT BE RELEASED FOR ANOTHER FOUR DAYS. REASON FOR DELAY WAS PAP WANTED TO SEE WHAT TANGOV INTENTIONS WERE WITH REGARD TO PRP DETAINEES. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER TANGOV RELEASED PRISONERS OR NOT, PRP OFFICERS WERE EMPHATIC THAT SMITH WOULD BE QTE DELIVERED TO MARROW'S BACK DOORSTEP UNQTE IN FOUR DAYS. EFFORTS TO DISCUSS SITUATION, OR TO SUGGEST THAT PART OF PARENTS' RANSOM BE WITHHELD PENDING SMITH'S SAFE RETURN, WERE ADAMANTLY REJECTED. ASKED TO SPECIFY WHAT DAY SMITH WOULD BE RETURNED, NONDO SAID QTE WEDNESDAY UNQTE; KIGOMA GROUP AND STUDENTS ARE SECRET

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UNCERTAIN WHETHER NIGHT OF TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY, OR NIGHT OF WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY, IS INTENDED, BUT INCLINED TO BELIEVE LATTER.

STUDENTS STATE THAT ALL PRP INFORMANTS INSISTED THAT HEWA BORA, PRP CAPITAL AND PRESUMPTIVE LOCATION OF PRP PRESIDENT KABILA, IS 600 KILOMETERS AND TEN DAYS MARCH FROM LAKESHORE, AND THAT NO FASTER MODE OF COMMUNICATION THAN COURIER EXISTS.

C. FAZ ACTIVITIES: FAZ GUNBOATS AND TRANSPORTS OPERATE REGULARLY ON LAKE, ACCORDING TO STUDENTS' INFORMATION (AND CONFIRMED BY CONSTANT SIGHTINGS AND HEARINGS OF ENGINES) BETWEEN KALEMIE AND BASE OF KALAMBA PENINSULA (CA. 4 DEGREES 30 MINUTES SOUTH LATITUDE). BEGINNING SEVERAL WEEKS AFTER THEIR CAPTURE GUNBOATS BEGAN PERIODIC PATROLS FIRING AGAINST TARGETS ON SHORE. AT END OF THEIR STAY THERE WERE SEVERAL CONCERTED FIRFIGHT ATTACKS FROM GUNBOATS AGAINST AREA OF VILLAGE WHERE STUDENTS WERE HELD, INCLUDING LAST ONE ON JUNE 24 WHEN FIRST AND UNSUCCESSFUL EXCHANGE OPERATION ATTEMPTED. FAZ FIRE PRETTY INACCURATE AND NO DAMAGE DONE IN STUDENTS' IMMEDIATE AREA, BUT AFTER FIRST MAJOR ATTACK THEY INSISTED SUCCESSFULLY ON BEING MOVED TO MORE PROTECTED LOCATION FURTHER INLAND THAN THEIR ORIGINAL QTE LAKE-VIEW UNQTE HUT. PRP RETURNED FAZ FIRE WITH RIFLES, HEAVY MACHINE GUNS AND BAZOOKAS, AND CLAIMED TO HAVE SUNK OR DISABLE SEVERAL FAZ GUNBOATS WITHOUT LOSS TO THEMSELVES. AFTER ATTACK ON JUNE 24, HOWEVER, STUDENTS HAD NO FURTHER EVIDENCE OF FAZ ACTIVITY IN AREA.

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 2322

LIMDIS

ADDIS ABABA FOR ASST SECTY DAVIS

D. MORALE OF STUDENTS: STUDENTS' MORALE REMAINED REASONABLY

HIGH, UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, THROUGHOUT CAPTIVITY. THEY WERE UNIFORMLY WELL TREATED THROUGHOUT. OF THE THREE, SMITH WAS MOST OPTIMISTIC THAT THEY WOULD BE SUCCESSFULLY RESCUED. THEY HAD, HOWEVER, PREPARED DETAILED CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR ESCAPE EFFORT (BY SWIMMING, WITH SOME SORT OF FLOATATION DEVICE), IF RESCUE HAD NOT COME OR DID NOT SEEM IMMINENT 45 DAYS AFTER THEIR FIRST CAPTURE (FEARING THAT THEY WOULD BE GUARDED MORE CLOSELY AS 60-DAY DEADLINE CAME TO END). HUNTER AND BERGMANN SAY THAT SMITH'S MORALE WHEN THEY LAST SAW HIM WAS GOOD, AND HE WAS CONFIDENT HE TOO WOULD RETURN HOME SAFELY. THEY DO NOT ANTICIPATE HE WILL ATTEMPT ANY ESCAPE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

E. PRP ATTITUDES: STUDENTS CONFIRM GENERAL PICTURE GIVEN BY BARBARA SMUTS OF PRP AS HIGHLY DISCIPLINED, WELL ORGANIZED, HIGHLY MOTIVATED POLITICAL/MILITARY ORGANIZATION. ONE FACTOR ENCOURAGING STUDENTS WAS PRP OFFICERS' INSISTENCE THAT UGANDAN PRESIDENT AMIN (WHOM PRP DESPISES) COULD NOT POSSIBLY AFFORD TO  
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CARRY OUT PROMISED EXECUTION OF BRITISH CITIZEN HILLS BECAUSE OF DAMAGE IT WOULD DO INTERNATIONALLY TO HIS REPUTATION AND ABILITY TO DEAL WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. ALFRED NONDO, RANKING OFFICIAL WITH WHOM THEY HAD ANY SIGNIFICANT CONTACT, IS LONG-TIME FRIEND AND TRUSTED CONFIDANT OF KABILA. NONDO IS ALSO (AS WE ALSO NOTED) MUCH CONCERNED WITH HIS OWN SELF-IMAGE, AND HIS IMAGE IN EYES OF OTHERS, AS A RESPONSIBLE, QTE HONORABLE OFFICER UNQTE OF AN QTE HONORABLE ORGANIZATION UNQTE ENGAGED IN A QTE NOBLE CAUSE UNQTE. HE APPEARED SOMEWHAT SHAKEN BY ORDERS RECEIVED FROM KABILA JUST PRIOR TO EXCHANGE BY WHICH HE ORDERED MODIFY AGREED ON TERMS OF EXCHANGE AND HOLD SMITH FOR FURTHER PERIOD, THOUGH HE OBEYED THEM WITHOUT QUESTION. AT SAME TIME HE WAS VERY FIRM IN ASSERTING THAT NO MATTER WHAT, SMITH WOULD BE RETURNED SAFELY IN FOUR DAYS. ESTIMATE OF ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN AFFAIR WHO HAVE HAD DEALINGS WITH NONDO IS THAT HE WILL, IF PERMITTED TO BY HIS SUPERIORS, KEEP HIS WORD.

F. PRP RADIO LISTENING HABITS: IN CASE IT AGAIN BECOMES SIGNIFICANT FACTOR, WE REPORT FOLLOWING. STUDENTS SAY PRP ARE INVERTERATE RADIO LISTENERS, PREFERRING NEWS AND TALK TO MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT; THEY FOLLOWED FOREIGN RADIO COVERAGE OF KIDNAPPING CLOSELY AND REPORTED REGULARLY ON IT TO STUDENTS. AMONG FAVORITE STATIONS THEY TUNE IN ARE WEST GERMAN SERVICE IN FRENCH (EVENING HOURS), RADIO SOUTH AFRICA, RADIO BUJUMBURA, AND RADIO KENYA. ZAIRE AND TANZANIAN RADIO SERVICES ARE HEARD BUT PRP DESPISED FORMER AND DISCOUNTED LATTER. STUDENTS CANNOT RECALL THAT PRP MENTIONED LISTENING TO BBC OR VOA (AND WERE THEMSELVES UNABLE TO PICK UP VOA).

3. COMMENT: ON BASIS OF INFORMATION NOW IN OUR POSSESSION, INCLUDING ABOVE, WE ARE MORE HOPEFUL THAT SMITH WILL BE RETURNED

AS PROMISED. IT IS AT LEAST POSSIBLE THAT NONDO IS ABLE TO GIVE ASSURANCES OF SMITH'S RETURN BECAUSE RELEASE OF KALENGA IS IN FACT THE GESTURE OF TANGOV QTE GOOD INTENTIONS UNQTE FOR WHICH KABILA MAY HAVE ORDERED THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF SMITH. (PRESUMABLY, OF COURSE, KABILA DID NOT YET KNOW OF KALENGA RELEASE.) NONDO MAY HAVE FELT CONSTRAINED BY KABILA'S NEW ORDERS NOT TO RELEASE SMITH IMMEDIATELY WITH OTHER STUDENTS (AND OWING TO TRANSFER OF EXCHANGE SITE TO NEW LOCATION, APPARENTLY LEAVING SMITH BEHIND, COULD NOT HAVE DONE SO HAD HE WISHED), BUT HE MAY BE ABLE TO PROMISE TO DO SO IN A FEW DAYS BECAUSE OF KALENGA RE-  
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LEASE.

4. OBVIOUSLY, MUCH LESS FAVORABLE OUTCOMES ARE POSSIBLE, BUT SO LONG AS ZAIRIAN MILITARY STANDDOWN CONTINUES FOR THIS BRIEF PERIOD, WE ARE REASONABLY OPTIMISTIC THAT SMITH WILL BE RETURNED. WE SEE NO OPTION BUT TO WAIT PATIENTLY AT LEASE UNTIL PROMISED FOUR-DAY PERIOD HAS EXPIRED.  
CARTER

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## Message Attributes

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